

The Honorable C. E. Wilson  
The Secretary of Defense  
Department of Defense  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your letter of 19 February 1953  
on the Chinese Communist employment of "brain washing"  
techniques on U.S. personnel within their custody.

We considered this matter at some length on  
Thursday the 19th at the luncheon of the Psychological  
Strategy Board members, which [ ] attended, and  
are now engaged in a close study of the matter here in  
CIA. As you may know, we have been following this  
subject for some time. I was able to make a preliminary  
report on the results of our studies to the PSB last  
Thursday and set forth the outlines of a program which  
will help to meet the objectives you have in mind.

We very much appreciate the materials which you  
sent over with your letter and will welcome any further  
opportunity to pool our intelligence on this problem.

Sincerely yours,

Allen W. Dulles  
Director

RELong:aml - 27 Feb 53  
Distr: O&I - addressee

1 - [ ]  
2 - Signer, w/basic

OSD HAS NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION AND RELEASE.

OSD review(s) completed.

*Official*

76915 #5

25X1

10705002000100040

reply to 76889

**ATTENTION:** This form will be attached to each Top Secret document received by the Central Intelligence Agency or classified Top Secret within the CIA and will remain attached to the document until such time as it is downgraded, destroyed, or transmitted outside of CIA. Access to Top Secret material is limited to those individuals whose official duties relate to the material. Each alternate or assistant Top Secret Control Officer who receives and/or releases the attached Top Secret material will sign this form and indicate period of custody in the left-hand columns provided. The name of each individual who has seen the Top Secret document and the date of handling should be indicated in the right-hand columns.

**K1**

**NOTICE OF DETACHMENT:** When this form is detached from Top Secret material it shall be completed in the appropriate spaces below and transmitted to Central Top Secret Control for record.

THE TOP SECRET MATERIAL DETACHED FROM THIS FORM WAS:		BY (Signature)	
DOWNGRADED <input type="checkbox"/>			
DESTROYED <input type="checkbox"/>			
DISPATCHED (OUTSIDE CIA) TO		OFFICE	DATE

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON

19 FEB 1953

Dear Mr. Dulles:

The Department of Defense, in considering a number of questions concerning Chinese Communist employment of so-called "brain washing" techniques on U.S. personnel within their custody, has come to the tentative conclusion that the Chinese Communists may have provided the United States and the free world with an effective psychological warfare issue which can be turned against them.

At the present time the evidence available suggests that in spite of some continuing physical abuse on the part of the Communists, many of our prisoners of war are being relatively well treated insofar as their bodily wants are concerned. However, there is ample evidence that some at least are also subjected to intensive indoctrination programs designed to convert them into "hard core" Communists and deliberate propaganda agents against the United States. These personnel receive many hours per day of lectures and discussions by political instructors. They are rewarded with better food and living conditions if they "learn their lessons well". Some few have already been released or permitted to escape with instructions to return to their own units and preach the Communist "party line" to their friends. Others have been exploited over the radio, in the mails, and in Communist films.

The Soviet world, utilizing the "confessions" and statements of such personnel as well as other means of direct and indirect propaganda, has accused the United States in particular, and to a lesser degree the United Nations Command in Korea, of atrocities extending from murder and rape to biological warfare. While official denials have been issued, the need for an effective counter propaganda weapon has become increasingly apparent.

Moreover, the fact that certain information concerning this Communist activity has appeared in the U.S. press and may soon appear abroad suggests an urgent need for prior action exposing these facts if the United States, and indeed the UN, are not to be subjected to increasingly severe domestic pressures concerning the entire repatriation issue. It is considered that an appropriately coordinated release describing Communist attempts to indoctrinate our personnel, and explaining the techniques employed, may, if spontaneously issued, allay natural public fears, and in fact provide the initial point for an effective counter propaganda campaign designed to create revulsion throughout the world concerning the Communist program.

TOP SECRET  
SECURITY INFORMATION

In this connection I am enclosing copies of a proposed press release and background information summary developed in the Department of the Army, as well as a preliminary study outlining a possible counter propaganda program based upon charging the Communists with a "new" form of war crime, and a new refinement in atrocity techniques; namely, "mind murder" or mendicide. At the same time the Department of Defense is undertaking an immediate program of deindoctrination and screening of available personnel and is forming a qualified professional investigating team to gather scientific evidence concerning the effectiveness of the Communist techniques.

If you agree that the program outlined above and the issuance of a press release have merit, I suggest that an integrated national psychological strategy program be developed by the staff in consultation with the interested departments as expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely yours,

*C. Wilson*

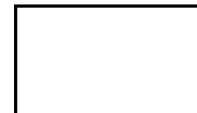
Enclosures - 3

- 1 - Proposed Press Release
- 2 - Background Information Summary
- 3 - Preliminary Study on Counter Propaganda Program

Honorable Allen W. Dulles  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency

19 Feb 53 -

Mr. Dulles has discussed this paper with General Smith, who indicated he was favorably disposed toward the program outlined and the issuance of the press release.



25X1

Copy of this (tr, plus attachments, given to Bannerman 21 Feb, for use in his discussions with [redacted] and [redacted] in the formulation of program.

25X1

TOP SECRET

REL

**TOP SECRET****SIGNATURE RECORD AND COVER SHEET**

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION		REGISTRY
SOURCE	C.E. Wilson	CIA CONTROL NO. TS 76889
DOC. NO.		DATE DOCUMENT RECEIVED 19 Feb 53
DOC. DATE	19 Feb 53	LOGGED BY DC
COPY NO.	#1	
NUMBER OF PAGES	2	
NUMBER OF ATTACHMENTS	1. Prop Press Rel 2. Background Study 3	

**ATTENTION:** This form will be attached to each Top Secret document received by the Central Intelligence Agency or classified Top Secret within the CIA and will remain attached to the document until such time as it is downgraded, destroyed, or transmitted outside of CIA. Access to Top Secret material is limited to those individuals whose official duties relate to the material. Each alternate or assistant Top Secret Control Officer who receives and/or releases the attached Top Secret material will sign this form and indicate period of custody in the left-hand columns provided. The name of each individual who has seen the Top Secret document and the date of handling should be indicated in the right-hand columns.

REFERRED TO	RECEIVED		RELEASED		SEEN BY	
OFFICE	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME	DATE	TIME	NAME AND OFFICE SYMBOL
ER	[Signature]			2/19	1600	
DD/I						
2850		21 Feb '53	AM			
		24 Feb '53	4:55 PM			
					25 Feb '53	AM 10:38
					2/25	1050.
					2/28	

**NOTICE OF DETACHMENT:** When this form is detached from Top Secret material it shall be completed in the appropriate spaces below and transmitted to Central Top Secret Control for record. *original ltr removed & returned.*

THE TOP SECRET MATERIAL DETACHED FROM THIS FORM WAS:		BY	[Signature]
DOWNGRADED <input type="checkbox"/>			
DESTROYED <input type="checkbox"/>			
DISPATCHED (OUTSIDE CIA) TO		OFFICE	DATE

**TOP SECRET**